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Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00

PRS-01 AF-06 H-02 /040 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/CCA:CGLEYSTEEN:YT
APPROVED BY ARA - AMB. RYAN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 043246 TOSEC 040222

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PROP, AD, CU

SUBJECT:CUBA INVITATION TO BLACKS FOR ANGOLA BRIEFING

FEBRUARY 21 WASHINGTON POST CARRIED STORY THAT CUBAN GOVERNMENT HAS INVITED A NUMBER OF AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS, PRIMARILY BLACK, TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO CUBA TO HEAR THE CUBAN VERSION OF EVENTS IN ANGOLA.

POST ARTICLE CITED LENNOX HINDS, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF BLACK LAWYERS, AS SAYING INVITATION WAS EXTENDED TO HIS ORGANIZATION BY MPLA THROUGH THE CUBAN UN MISSION FOR FEBRUARY 23 THROUGH MARCH 2.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS MENTIONED IN ARTICLE WERE: BLACK ECONOMIC RESEARCH CENTER IN NEW YORK, AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, BLACK NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION, AND CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS.

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WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THE HILL THAT AN INVITATION WAS

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RECEIVED BY CONGRESSMAN CHARLES DIGGS AND CONGRESSWOMAN
YVONNE BURKE WHICH WAS WORDED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT
MIGHT APPLY TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BLACK CAUCUS.

INVITATION WAS ISSUED ON BEHALF OF MPLA FOR MEETING TO
BE HELD IN CUBA AND WAS ONLY RECEIVED ON FEBRUARY 20.
DIGGS AND BURKE WILL SEND PRELIMINARY RESPONSE THAT
INVITATION ARRIVED TOO LATE FOR THEM TO RESPOND
AFFIRMATIVELY. BLACK CAUCUS WILL TAKE UP QUESTION
NEXT WEEK WHETHER FUTURE VISITS TO CUBA SHOULD BE MADE.

YOU WILL RECALL TWO WEEKS AGO WE HEARD THAT CONGRESSMAN
CHARLES RANGEL HAD BEEN INVITED TO VISIT CUBA. HIS
OFFICE TOLD US HE WOULD MAKE NO DECISION UNTIL AFTER
THE WASHINGTON BIRTHDAY RECESS. IT NOT CLEAR WHETHER
THIS PUTATIVE TRIP WAS CONNECTED WITH INVITATION REFERRED
TO BY HINDS. LIKEWISE WE HEARD RUMOR THAT CONGRESSMAN
ANDREW YOUNG MIGHT BE GOING BUT WERE UNABLE TO CONFIRM IT.

WE HAVE RECEIVED NO REQUESTS FOR PASSPORT VALIDATIONS
FOR TRIPS TO CUBA EXCEPT FROM MOSES JAMES NEWSON, A
BONE FIDE BLACK JOURNALIST FOR WHOM WE ROUTINELY
AUTHORIZED PASSPORT VALIDATION.

WE ALSO HAVE HAD AN FBI REPORT ABOUT VARIOUS INDIVIDUALS
IN NEW YORK MOSTLY FROM "PROGRESSIVE" SOUNDING
ORGANIZATIONS WHO HAVE BEEN INVITED TO CUBA. THESE
PEOPLE HAVE NOT APPLIED FOR PASSPORT VALIDATIONS AND
ARE NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THEY ACTUALLY PROCEEDED TO CUBA,
BUT PRESUMABLY SOME DID.

AS SEEN FROM HERE AND BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE
CUBAN/MPLA INITIATIVE SEEMS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN
UNUSUALLY SLIPSHOD WAY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, INVITATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE043246
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: CGLEYSTEEN:YT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760067-1002
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760222/aaaaatea.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 NOV 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <22 JUL 2004 by coburnhl, REFER TO FBI>; RELEASED <04 NOV 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UBA INVITATION TO BLACKS FOR ANGOLA BRIEFING FEBRUARY 21 WASHINGTON POST CARRIED STORY THAT CUBAN
TAGS: PFOR, PROP, AO, CU, US, XA, MPLA, (DIGGS, CHARLES), (BURKE, YVONNE)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006